6: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945)1954 ND12 Nahane ND12

Upper Liard

685 Sanctions invoked to enforce property conceptions failed to be made explicit by informants. Probably they included the application of individual force, expressed verbally or physically, with the consent of the community. That is to say, if a man could not claim that to which he felt a right he might seize the goods and in the process perhaps inflict punishment on his rival. Property offenses also earned offenders an unfavorable public opinion. No force was used to compel a person to share meat but "We had a cache too. We could do the same thing. We won't give him much." Reciprocity therefore constituted one device serving to maintain the pattern of food sharing.

681 The aboriginal community found itself compelled to deal with lying, assault, manslaughter, infanticide, murder, cannibalism, sorcery, incest, unwed motherhood, [577] adultery, and treason. A common form of lying consisted of a person returning from a hunt and telling exaggerated stories of the amount of game that he had seen. Not many such accounts were needed before the liar found himself regularly disbelieved. Against slander a quick tempered man reacted by killing his calumniator. Injuries inflicted due [672] to assault were settled by payment, a distinction apparently being made between wounds deliberately inflicted and those resulting accidentally. At least, no payment followed in the case of hurts secured from children's play. Likewise the people distinguished manslaughter from murder. In event of the former no vengeance followed but a payment, considerably lower than that obtaining in the case of murder, was expected. An Indian who committed manslaughter might be adopted in place of the deceased.[33] People would drive out of the community a woman whose neglect caused her child to 847 starve. "Let her starve," the people said in the hope that other people would thereby learn the necessity of treating each other more kindly. Infanticide of either a girl or boy infant merited severe scolding. The temptation to kill a baby appears to have been limited to cases where offspring resulted from incestuous unions. Such a child was sometimes killed in the birth camp, the mother stuffing its mouth with moss. The informant recalled no instance of abortion but he thought the deed would have been classified as murder.

682 Murder might be settled through a large payment, made in installments running over a year or more, or by blood revenge. Weregild required the cooperation of all the members of the murderer's family. Vengeance constituted the duty of the victim's brother or uncle (father's brother?) and was never undertaken by a father. Retaliatory action always went against the actual killer and not against members of his family.[34] It is not

[33] Among the Tlingit "any crime may be paid for on a money basis." (Jones, *Study of the Thlingets of Alaska* [1914], 193.) Weregild is stated to follow in restitution for murder and manslaughter among certain Kwakiutl tribes, the Tsimshian, Haida, and Tlingit Chilkat. Drucker, *Culture Element Distributions: XXVI, Northwest Coast* (1950), 221.

[165] [34] "The original Indians claiming the country of the Upper Pelly and its tributaries have completely disappeared with the exception of one old woman. . . . The main causes for this is quarreling amongst themselves. . . . generally started by two men fighting and one killing the other, when the relations and friends would take the quarrel up and kill the first man or some of his relatives to get even and so they would keep the quarrel going until one party were all dead or so weakened that for a time they were satisfied to stop. Secondly, by stronger tribes making raids on them and killing the men and taking their women away with them . . . ." Field, *Unpublished manuscript* (1913), 1.

6: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945)1954 ND12 Nahane ND12
Upper Liard
Deasi River

weapons like a bow. Persistence in such behavior, she learned, might affect a brother's heart. Upon approaching puberty a boy began to seek a power dream with the active encouragement of his father. From now on he began to sleep in his own camp or perhaps in the company of older unmarried brothers. The custom probably reinforced the brother-sister avoidance and is also said to have safeguarded youths in the event of a surprise enemy raid.

Deasi River Kaska. To eat fowl, rabbit, and porcupine or other soft foods in pregnancy promised to facilitate delivery. Parturition took place in a birth camp, that consisted of a circular wall of willows surrounding a fireplace. Here older women brought food from the main camp and assisted in the process of delivery. An ordinary knife served for cutting the umbilicus. Later the stump of the cord was dried, wrapped in a piece of tanned skin and sewn to the baby's hat, where it remained until the child began to walk. An infant would cry for a long time if this amulet became lost. Eventually the cord would be cached in a tree, where the skin-wrapped afterbirth had already been deposited (although it was probably not necessary that the same tree be employed). Following delivery the woman remained isolated and avoided sex relations for about three months.

Twins represented good fortune and neither of such a pair was killed. The Indians preferred boy babies to girls because the former would become hunters. Apparently female infanticide was sometimes condoned.[1]

Breast feeding lasted until about the age of three. On journeys, when a child began to cry the whole group of women might halt while it nursed. In winter during outdoor feeding fire had to be made for the nursing woman's comfort. No principles of naming were specified and teknonymy was denied.

Either parent exercised discipline. Children beyond the age of five who misbehaved or refused to heed parents' warnings were struck with the hands alone. Crawling in a young child met no discouragement. Toys included the buzz toy, bull-roarer, rawhide rattle, hoop to be pushed by a pole, and hollow moose hooves hung on a pole, which a child delighted in shaking. Dolls were not played with but string figures, a pastime said to have been derived from the Taku Indians, furnished children with a pleasant occupation.

ADOLESCENCE

Upper Liard Kaska. Coinciding with the vision quest, which in a sense marked the completion of childhood, a boy received training in hardihood and endurance.[2] In autumn he stripped and plunged into icy water. When winter came, groups of naked boys rolled in soft snow, after which some older men whipped the youths with willows. A boy never cried out in pain during such a trial but he could protect his chest with crossed arms and might escape when he reached the limit of endurance. A mild com-

[1] Among the Tlingit, infant girls were sometimes strangled. Twins being regarded as an "evil omen" were also put to death. Jones, *Study of the Thlingets of Alaska* (1914), 121.

[2] Perhaps the exercises began earlier and finished at puberty, as among the Navaho. Leighton and Kluckhohn, *Children of the People* (1947), 56-57.